

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended): An endoluminal apparatus comprising:

an elongated main body having a proximal end, a distal end configured for advancement through a body lumen, and at least one lumen extending therethrough, the main body having at least a first section near the proximal end, a second section therebetween and a third section near the distal end, at least one of the sections being comprised of a plurality of adjacent links and wherein

the first section is deflectable,

the second section is laterally stabilized and deflectable independently of the first section in only a single plane, and

the third section is steerable independently of the second section.

2. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second section and/or third section are independently lockable in a deflected position.

3. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second section is capable of forming an arc which traverses approximately 270 degrees.

4. (Original): The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the arc has a radius of curvature between about 5 and 12 centimeters.
5. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the third section is steerable to direct the distal end within any axial plane in a 360 degree circumference around the second section.
6. (Original): The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the third section is steerable to direct the distal end within only one of the axial planes in a 360 degree circumference around the second section.
7. (Original): The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the third section is further steerable to direct the distal end within any plane perpendicular the any axial plane.
8. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the at least one lumen is sized for passage of an endoscope.
9. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the elongated main body includes an endoscope.

10. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the at least one lumen terminates in a side opening near the distal end.

11. (Original): The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the side opening is located within the second section.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first section is comprised of a continuous length of material.

14. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, further including a bite block mounted on the main body near the proximal end.

15. (Original): The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the at least one lumen comprises a suction lumen extending axially along the main body.

16. (Original): The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the suction lumen is joined with a suction cap near the distal end, the suction cap including a port disposed perpendicularly to a longitudinal axis of the main body.

17. (Original): The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the main body includes a scope extending axially along the main body.

18. (Original): The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the scope has a distal end disposed within the suction cap.

19. (Original): The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the suction cap includes an exit port positioned to allow passage of a distal end of the scope therethrough.

20. (Original): An endoluminal apparatus comprising:

an elongated main body having a proximal end, a distal end configured for advancement through a body lumen, and at least one lumen extending therethrough, the main body having at least a first section near the proximal end, a second section therebetween and a third section near the distal end, wherein

the second section is comprised of a plurality of adjacent links, wherein each link is configured to allow rotation in a single plane and the links are arranged so that the second section is laterally stabilized and deflectable in only the single plane, and

the third section is comprised of a plurality of adjacent links, wherein each link is configured to allow rotation and the links are arranged so that the third section is steerable in a plurality of planes.

21. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the links of the second section are pivotally connected by hinge structures, wherein the hinge structures comprise pivot pins which are arranged in parallel to limit deflection to the single plane.

22. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein each link of the second section is contoured to mate with an adjacent link so that rotation is allowed in the single plane and resisted in a plane perpendicular to the single plane.

23. (Original): The apparatus of claim 22, wherein each link of the second section has the same shape.

24. (Original): The apparatus of claim 22, wherein at least one of the links of the second section comprises a bump link or a saddle link.

25. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein each link of the third section is contoured to mate with an adjacent link and rotate in the plurality of planes so that rotation of each link allows steering of the distal end in the plurality of planes.

26. (Original): The apparatus of claim 25, wherein at least one of the links in the third section is comprised of a nestable element.

27. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein each link of the third section is contoured to mate with an adjacent link and rotate in a single plane, and wherein the links are arranged so that rotation of each link allows steering of the distal end in the plurality of planes.

28. (Original): The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the links of the third section are arranged so that each link is able to rotate in a single plane which is perpendicular to the single plane of rotation of the link immediately adjacent.

29. (Original): The apparatus of claim 28, wherein at least one of the links in the third section is comprised of a bump link, pin link, a pin nested link or a rattlesnake link.

30. (Original): The apparatus of claim 29, wherein the at least one link in the third section is comprised of a plurality of pin nested links, wherein the plurality pin nested links comprises at least a first link and an adjacent second link, the first link having a pin which is slidably engageable with a slot in the adjacent second link.

31. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the first section is comprised of a plurality of adjacent links, wherein each link is configured to allow rotation and the links are arranged so that the third section is deflectable in a plurality of planes.

32. (Original): The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the first section is contoured to mate with an adjacent link and rotate in a single plane, and wherein the links are arranged so that rotation of each link allows steering in the plurality of planes.

33. (Original): The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the links of the first section are arranged so that each link is able to rotate in a single plane which is perpendicular to the single plane of rotation of the link immediately adjacent.

34. (Original): The apparatus of claim 33, wherein at least one of the links in the first section is comprised of a bump link, pin link, a pin nested link or a rattlesnake link.

35. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the first section is comprised of a continuous length of material.

36. (Original): The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinyl chloride, polyurethane, nylon and a combination of any of these.

37. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the first section and second section are comprised of identical links.

38. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the main body includes at least one locking mechanism which locks at least a portion of the main body in a desired configuration.

39. (Original): The apparatus of claim 38, wherein the at least one locking mechanism locks the second section independently of the third section.

40. (Original): The apparatus of claim 38, wherein the at least one locking mechanism locks the first section independently of the second section.

41. (Original): The apparatus of claim 38, wherein the at least one locking mechanism locks each of the sections independently.

42. (Original): The apparatus of claim 38, wherein the main body includes a torque transmitting feature which provides torque transmission between the proximal and distal ends while the main body is unlocked and able to form a desired configuration.

43. (Original): The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the at least one lumen comprises a suction lumen extending axially along the main body.

44. (Original): The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the suction lumen is joined with a suction cap near the distal end, the suction cap including a port disposed perpendicularly to a longitudinal axis of the main body.

45. (Original): The apparatus of claim 44, wherein the main body includes a scope extending axially along the main body.

46. (Original): The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the scope has a distal end disposed within the suction cap.

47. (Original): The apparatus of claim 45, wherein the suction cap includes an exit port positioned to allow passage of a distal end of the scope therethrough.

48. (Currently Amended): An endoluminal apparatus comprising:

an elongated main body having a proximal end and a distal end configured for advancement through a body lumen,

the main body having at least a first section near the proximal end, a second section therebetween and a third section near the distal end, wherein the second section is deflectable independently of the first section and is capable of forming an arc which traverses approximately 270 degrees, and

the main body having at least one lumen passing ~~from the proximal end to a side opening positioned within the second section facing the inside of the arc~~ therethrough with at least one of the sections being comprised of a plurality of adjacent links.

49. (Original): The apparatus of claim 48, wherein the at least one lumen is sized for passing an endoscope therethrough.

50. (Currently Amended): The apparatus of claim ~~[[49]]~~ 48, wherein the at least one lumen terminates in a side opening positioned within the second section facing the inside of the arc so that the endoscope is directed to allow visualization of the distal end.

51. (Original): The apparatus of claim 48, wherein the at least one lumen is sized for passing a tool arm therethrough.

52. (Original): The apparatus of claim 48, wherein the main body further includes at least one lumen passing from the proximal end to the distal end.

53. (Currently Amended): An endoluminal access system comprising:

an elongated main body having a proximal end, a distal end configured for advancement through a body lumen, and at least one lumen extending therethrough, the main body having at least a first section near the proximal end, a second section therebetween and a third section near

the distal end, at least one of the sections being comprised of a plurality of adjacent links and
wherein

the first section is deflectable,

the second section is laterally stabilized and deflectable independently of the first section
in only a single plane, and

the third section is steerable independently of the second section; and

a bite block mountable on the main body near the proximal end.

54. (Original): The system of claim 53, wherein the bite block includes an
orifice through which the main body is passable.

55. (Original): A suction system comprising:

an elongated main body having a distal end, a proximal end, and at least one lumen
extending over or through at least a distal section of the elongated main body, the main body
having at least one shape-lockable portion along its length and the at least one lumen including a
suction lumen; and

a suction cap coupled with the suction lumen near the distal end of the elongated body,
the suction cap including a port disposed perpendicularly to a longitudinal axis of the main body.

56. (Original): A system as in claim 55, wherein the at least one lumen includes
an instrument lumen configured to guide an instrument therethrough to within the suction cap.

57. (Original): A system as in claim 56, wherein the instrument lumen is configured to guide the instrument axially across the port while remaining within the suction cap.

58. (Original): A system as in claim 57, further comprising a needle advanceable through the instrument lumen and axially across the port while remaining within the suction cap.

59. (Original): A system as in claim 55, further comprising a scope having a proximal end and a distal end, the scope advanceable through one of the at least one lumen of the main body.

60. (Original): A system as in claim 59, wherein the distal end of the scope is advanceable to within the suction cap.

61. (Original): A system as in claim 60, wherein the suction cap includes an exit port positioned to allow passage of a distal end of the scope from within the suction cap to outside of the suction cap.

62. (Original): A system as in claim 59, wherein the distal end of the scope is advanceable beyond the distal end of the main body and wherein the distal end of the scope is directable to view the suction cap from outside of the suction cap.

63. (Original): A system as in claim 62, further comprising a suction tube extending through the suction lumen and extending beyond the distal end of the main body, the suction lumen coupled with the suction cap.

64. (Original): A system as in claim 63, wherein the suction cap includes a grasping feature which is graspable for positioning the suction cap independently of the main body.

65. (Original): A system as in claim 64, further comprising a grasper advanceable through the main body and configured to grasp the grasping feature.

66. (Original): A system as in claim 65, wherein the grasper is advanceable through a lumen in the scope.

67. (Currently Amended): An endoluminal apparatus comprising:

an elongated main body having a proximal end, a distal end configured for advancement through a body lumen, and at least one lumen extending therethrough, the main body having at least a first section near the proximal end and a second section near the distal end,

wherein the first section is configured to ~~shape-lock~~ temporarily rigidized into an arbitrary shape, and

wherein the second section is configured to retroflex relative to the first section, and

wherein at least one of the sections is comprised of a plurality of adjacent links.